

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

160910Z Aug 04

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 001394

SIPDIS

EUCOM FOR USAFE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/27/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: GENERAL FOGLESONG'S VISIT

Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for Reasons 1.5 (B & D).

11. (C) Embassy hosted 8-10 August a visit to Abuja by General Robert H. Foglesong, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE). His purpose in his first-ever trip to Nigeria was to establish personal contact with senior Nigerian military officials and set the stage for greater security assistance initiatives with the Nigerian Air Force. General Foglesong and delegation, accompanied by the Ambassador and DATT, paid office calls August 9 on National Security Advisor (NSA) Aliyu Mohammed, Minister of Defence (MOD) Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso and Minister of State for Defence Dr. Rowland Oritsejafor, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Alexander O. Ogomudia, and Chief of Air Staff (CAS) Air Marshal Jonah D. Wuyup. The Ambassador also hosted a reception for senior Nigerian military officials and officers with ambassadors and defense attaches from ECOWAS member states.

GULF OF GUINEA SECURITY

12. (C) During the office call, NSA Aliyu Mohammed emphasized that the Gulf of Guinea is Nigeria's "livelihood," and asserted that its vast petroleum resources established its considerable and growing importance to the United States. In light of the Gulf's mutual import to both countries, the NSA expressed the GON's desire to collaborate with the United States on securing the Gulf of Guinea. In doing so, the NSA went further forward than other GON officials in requesting U.S. assistance in the Gulf. CAS Wuyup also stressed Gulf of Guinea security, against the backdrop of increasing instability in the Middle East threatening world and U.S. access to that region's petroleum reserves. CDS Ogomudia described the many threats to stability in the Niger Delta region, including economic and ethnic, but emphasized the most dire as the criminal, in the form of smuggling, illegal oil bunkering and kidnapping.

COUNTERTERRORISM

13. (C) The NSA underscored that Nigeria's porous borders made the country vulnerable to the threat of international terrorism. Minister Kwankwaso also highlighted the fight against terrorism as a shared, mutual priority with the U.S., as did CDS Ogomudia. The CDS emphasized that counterterrorism intelligence sharing and what he called "denial of funds" are important priorities in the mutual efforts of Nigeria and the United States in the war against terrorism.

STABILITY IN LIBYA

14. (C) The NSA claimed to have visited Libya over 100 times in the past few decades. The NSA said Libyans had become tired of their isolation from the rest of the world. He described a mellowed President Muammar Qaddafi as now grown beyond his earlier "revolutionary" days, in part because of the influence of his Western educated children -- particularly one daughter attending university in London. The NSA felt the next stage for Libya in the coming years would include elections with independent parties; but whatever came, he firmly held that change would happen only gradually.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE NIGERIAN MILITARY

15. (C) Raising Gulf of Guinea stability and Nigeria's border vulnerabilities, the NSA requested further U.S. assistance in securing them both, specifically suggesting enhancements in Nigerian peacekeeping operations capability, and humanitarian aid and airlift capacity. The CDS saw a need for U.S. assistance in improving Nigeria's military capacity to stabilize the Niger Delta region, including improved Nigerian airlift, C-130 spare parts, buoy tenders and more joint training. Citing the recent transfer of former U.S. Coast Guard buoy tenders to the Nigerian Navy, the CAS declared that now is the time to improve the Nigerian military's capacity and capability to handle the sources of instability in the Gulf of Guinea and the Delta. He described improving Nigerian-U.S. military-to-military relations as a key point of mutual interest.

16. (C) COMMENT: The meeting with Aliyu Mohammed was the most substantive, and the National Security Advisor went the furthest in outlining a possible enhanced U.S.-Nigeria security relationship. In subsequent remarks to the press, General Ogomudia, too, foreshadowed an enhanced security relationship. However, the presence of U.S. security personnel in anything other than the smallest numbers will be deeply controversial with President Obasanjo's legion of critics, and could clearly affect the longer term prospects for his government. The President is already seen as in our pocket, and the U.S. is seen as a primary prop for his government. For that reason, the President and those around him may be less forward leaning than Aliyu Mohammed or Ogomudia.

17. (U) General Foglesong and party were unable to clear this cable prior to departure.
CAMPBELL